

City employees pick up hints at Dress for Success workshop

By David Olson

SPECIAL FOR THE REPUBLIC

A group of Tempe city employees got some advice from a personal shopper Monday on how to "Dress for Success."

Karen Coatsworth, a Macy's personal shopper, joined Nicole Maletta, a regional manager in charge of personal shopping and interior design, in the event at Women In Networking event.

They told about 40 guests at the Tempe Public Library how to put together business casual attire, as well as how to dress for comfort when the weather gets hot.

The women offered tips on how to dress for interviews and how to put together appropriate casual or formal outfits.

"The first and most lasting impression we make is how we dress," Coatsworth said. "It can enhance or impede our chances."

The event was held by the city's Women In Networking program in honor of National Women's History Month. WIN provides networking opportunities for women working for Tempe, said Rosa Inchausti, manager of Tempe's diversity department.

Coatsworth said how we dress sends a silent and powerful message to others.

"It has been proven that how we dress and present ourselves has a high effect on how we get ahead," she said.

"It's a powerful message we're sending in the workplace. ... A woman

dressed appropriately in the workplace shows she values her position," Coatsworth said.

She said the women attending the WIN event were "getting together to advance their careers," and knowing how to dress for the workplace is a necessary step for that.

"Assuming you want to advance in the city of Tempe, consider yourself being interviewed every day," Coatsworth said.

She and Maletta told the audience that knowing an office's dress code is key to preparing outfits to wear at work.

"If you look in the mirror and ask yourself if it is appropriate, then it's not," Maletta said.

Observing how your superiors dress and following their lead was Coatsworth's advice.

"If you are dressing appropriately you get a leg up," she said.

The event was very interesting, said library specialist Lily Rice.

"It gave me some good ideas for interviews and work," she said.

Rice said the event would be beneficial to Tempe, as the city strives to educate its employees in the different aspects of a work environment.

Women In Networking hosts an event at least every three months, said Inchausti. The city started the WIN program in 2006, and its members come from almost all of Tempe's 17 departments.